

## **Orange Juice** by **miawweasley**

**Category:** Stranger Things, 2016

**Genre:** Angst, Hurt-Comfort

**Language:** English

**Characters:** Eleven/Jane H., Mike W.

**Status:** In-Progress

**Published:** 2019-10-30 15:11:35

**Updated:** 2019-10-30 15:11:35

**Packaged:** 2019-12-12 14:35:34

**Rating:** M

**Chapters:** 1

**Words:** 1,833

**Publisher:** [www.fanfiction.net](http://www.fanfiction.net)

**Summary:** Her diet consisted of cotton balls soaked in orange juice.

## Orange Juice

**WARNING: THIS BOOK CONTAINS HEAVY TOPICS INCLUDING EATING DISORDERS, BULLYING, ABUSE, AND STRONG USAGE OF LANGUAGE. IF ANY OF THESE TOPICS ARE DISTURBING TO YOU I RECOMMEND READING NO FURTHER.**

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*I'm on the edge of something breaking*

*I feel my mind is slowly fading*

*If I keep going I won't make it*

\*

The first thing Eleven Hopper did when she awoke from her slumber was lock her door. The next thing she did was strip herself of her clothes, the cold air hitting her body harshly and making her shiver.

But the thing that made her shiver even more was the sight of herself.

She had gained a few pounds on the lower portion of her stomach, that much she could tell, and as far as she was concerned her thighs had gotten thicker.

She grew more frustrated the more she looked at herself, so frustrated that tears dripped down her face and hit the carpet of her room in meaningless drops of salty water.

The drops of water left her eyes with insignificance; she had shed tears quite often, whether it was out of disgust with herself or frustration that she was getting nowhere with exercise. She pushed herself so hard everyday but she only seemed to be gaining more weight, only seemed to be tipping the numbers up on her scale a little bit more each day.

She sighed in defeat and sank to the ground next to her mirror, her body now against the material of her carpet. She rubbed circles along the carpet with her thumb and forefinger all the while letting the

tears fall, letting them become a background focus as she concentrated on the feeling of the soft, ivory strands underneath the pads of her fingertips.

The tears slowed down, almost like a hard downpour of rain fading away into a light drizzle that barely left an imprint on your skin. The drizzle eventually fell into nothing except a stain on her cheeks that she neglected to wipe away until she rose from the ground and transferred the wetness on her face to the back side of hand, then moving it to her thighs as she covered herself with one of Mike's shirts that he must of left here after one of their late night rendezvouses.

As the shower water hit her face she couldn't help but compare it to the tears that fell onto her face just moments before, and she would have laughed at the thought had she not been so emotionally exhausted, and she had only been awake for about a half an hour.

It was going to be a long day, but what else was new?

\*

"And then I told him to fuck off!" Dustin finished excitedly. He had just been explaining to the group how he had yelled at his history teacher for being such an asshole to him, just because Dustin knew more about the lesson than he did.

"Yeah right," Lucas, who had been fairly quiet during his seemingly fake story the entire time, chimed in before he could say more. "If that actually happened your ass would be in detention right now."

"Friday, after school, baby," he said proudly, a wide grin making its way onto his face, displaying his teeth. Lucas rolled his eyes but couldn't hold back a smile as Max laughed at the curly-haired boy.

"So, arcade after school today, right?" Mike asked, hand rested gently on El's thigh, her head propped lightly against his shoulder as if he was a pillow — and if he was, he was the most comfortable one, if anyone were to ask for El's opinion.

They all made sounds of agreement before the bell rang, causing

them to scramble for their things and dash out of the cafeteria all at different exits, with the exception of Lucas and El, who walked calmly together as they had their next class, math, together.

As they began the walk down the hallway Eleven couldn't help but stare wistfully at the surrounding girls.

All of them were effortlessly beautiful, their perfect bodies matching their perfect faces. She couldn't help but compare them to herself. All of them were skinny, flat stomachs and thin legs blessing their bodies. She didn't even try to fight the urge to look down at herself, and she cringed as she remembered that she had just eaten lunch.

She mentally cursed herself for even picking up the food in the first place.

"Hey, Lucas," she said suddenly, causing his head to turn towards her as his eyebrows drew downwards. She continued.

"Do you think you could head to class without me, I need to stop in the bathroom," she said, and he nodded while smiling at her.

"Of course. But, you do know Mrs. Johnson isn't going to excuse you, right?" he asked, the tone in his voice speaking volumes on how much they both hated that damn teacher. She rolled her eyes.

"It's fine, I'd rather be marked tardy than pee my pants."

He laughed at her comment before saluting as a farewell and disappearing into the crowds of students. She kept the smile on her face, no matter how tight lipped it grew, until she reached the safe confinement of the bathroom stalls.

She leaned against the stall, feeling the overwhelming urge to do something.

She felt disgusting, even more disgusting than she did this morning, and she couldn't help the tears that prickled at the corners of her eyes at the thought of this morning. She was so disappointed in herself for eating at lunch today, she had promised herself she would skip it so she wouldn't look bloated in the shirt she was wearing that day.

The tears weren't able to hold in her eyes and a few escaped and leaked down her soft skin before she wiped them away, not wanting to cry on the bathroom floor of the school.

She lurched forward over the toilet, her hair framing her face as she stared into the bowl. Her finger was itching, it was so, so close to her lips that if she move it a few inches it would be peaking through her lips. So close to her throat.

The itch intensified and before she knew it her mouth had opened to allow her pointer finger access inside. The bell was ringing but everything was background noise as she truly contemplated whether or not she should move her finger a little further down her throat.

The sudden sound of a door opening and shoes walking across the ugly tile of the bathroom floor caused El to shoot up and flush the toilet as if she had been using the toilet.

She took a shaky breath and walked out to see one of her biggest tormentors reapplying that ugly shade of pink to her lips. She smirked in the mirror when she saw El's slightly dishevelled face behind her.

"Wow, I bet you were crying in the bathroom because of how ugly you are," Stacy said with laugh at the end of her statement.

El clenched her fists in anger. Anger over the fact that Stacy was right, what she was saying was true.

She was crying the the bathroom because of how ugly she was.

Her nails tore at her skin as she squeezed her fists into a tighter grip against her palms as the blonde made her way over to where El was standing.

"You're an ugly, fat, piece of shit," she spat, eyes narrowed. "Never forget that."

Oh, El never would.

In fact, it was repeating in her head as soon as she arrived home from the arcade.

The words Stacy had spoken to her earlier all seemed to swirl around in the water of the toilet bowl that she was facing; she was knelt in front of it, hands gripping the seat, not unlike the way she had at the school earlier that day, and the familiar itch rose in her again.

With Stacy's words still echoing in her mind, she stuck her finger down her throat.

She immediately withdrew it, as her mind had told her to, but when she went back a second time she kept going and going and going until she felt a surge within her body. She pulled her finger out and pulled her hair to the side as she threw up.

It left that awful taste in her mouth but she couldn't have felt more satisfied with the emptiness it guaranteed. She wasn't going to gain those few pounds, and she let out a breath of relief at that.

She leaned her head against the bathtub, lazily reaching over and flushing the toilet before she felt more come up her throat. She barely made it to the toilet in time as more vomit left her mouth, an even worst taste staining her tongue.

She grimaced at the taste before smiling in triumph once more, pulling her hair up into a bun as she tried to catch her breath.

El heard footsteps ascend the stairs and she quickly sprayed cherry merlot room spray in the small bathroom she shared with Will before grabbing her toothbrush to make it look like she was just brushing her teeth.

He knocked, and she mumbled a muffled "come in!" to which he opened the door, revealing a smiling Will.

"Hey, little sis," he said, pushing her to the side and grabbing a tissue to blow his nose.

"Ugh, for the last time, I could be older than you, we'll just never know," she said after spitting out the toothpaste in her mouth, rolling her eyes as he threw the tissue in the trash.

"Whatever, I know I'm older than you," he said smugly, to which she rolled her eyes once more.

"Hey, why are you sweating?" he asked, pausing to examine her.

Shit.

El had never been a good liar — or, at least, not until she met the party. Friends don't lie had been imprinted into her mind so fiercely it was almost a force that guided her through the day.

"I don't- I'm not!" she said, stumbling over her words. "I'm not."

"I can literally see you, why'd you get so defensive?"

"It's just hot, okay?" She suddenly felt a wave of dizziness wash over her, and her knees buckled slightly before Will reached out and grabbed her.

"El, are you okay?" he asked frantically, supporting her weight with his own.

El shrugged him off, suddenly feeling very irritated. She didn't need him babying her like their parents did. Like everyone did. She hated that.

"I'm fine," she spat, pushing him off of her. "Can't you just leave me alone?"

She retreated from the bathroom, walking over to her room, leaving a wide eyed Will in her wake.